

thor had not dragged in this added complication at all.

It is, perhaps, not within the province of the reviewer to tell authors how they should have written a book, but this one may be excused on the grounds of complete sincerity. If I have been unduly hard on "Whisper My Name," such was not my intention. It is a good novel, but it just misses being an outstanding one, and perhaps for the very reasons that I have mentioned.

Hunger . . .

THE WOLF THAT FED US. By Robert Lowry. New York: Doubleday & Co. 220 pp. \$2.75.

By HARRISON SMITH

ROBERT LOWRY'S collection of short stories gets its title from an American soldier's momentary glance at Rome's historic bronze she-wolf suckling Romulus and Remus, as he goes back to the wars from an orgiastic furlough in Rome. Private Joe could not tell Private Burt why he felt emotionally involved in something he couldn't put into words, but to the reader it is plain enough why the mother wolf made him think of the Roman girls and women he had seen who had appeased the hunger and in some measure restored the manhood of hordes of exhausted conquerors. "The Wolf That Fed Us" is a book that should be left alone by moralists who are not willing to look at the sexual aspects of war without grimacing with disgust or hostility.

Mr. Lowry's stories with only one or two exceptions deal with love, if one can call it that, as it was experienced by the United States Army before and during the invasion in Italy and after the war. If the theme becomes somewhat monotonous, it is given continued vitality by the author's restrained anger, his compassion for the men and for the women engaged in this frightful traffic in which the male thirst for sex was met by the female's hunger for food. He is as successful in creating his tragic

girls as he is in distinguishing between one uniformed man and another equally obsessed by the twin desires for forgetfulness in drink and sex. It can too easily be called a brutal book since it is at times realistic enough to produce a kind of nausea of the spirit.

In only one of the stories, the first, is there any approach to love as happiness, an ecstasy of the emotions. In the rest it is a gruesome necessity for men and women alike. In one, a girl living on the Mexican border after a wretched marriage finally surrenders to promiscuity. In another, a young soldier on the way home to his family for a furlough becomes the prisoner of a woman who casts him aside when she has had enough of him. Toward the end a lonely woman in Greenwich Village suffers the torments of the damned when she discovers that she is attracted by a loose-lipped young gangster who haunts her street. This story, "The Terror in the Streets," is too powerful in its revelation of sexual starvation to be forgotten and is perhaps the best of the entire collection.

The title story that brings the adventures of Joe and Burt among the starving women of Rome is followed by a hundred pages or so of realism more intense and certainly more pitiful than the chapters in John Horne Burns's "The Gallery," in which sex and the Army in Naples repeat the scenes in Mr. Lowry's book. With these two volumes in his possession the reader can well dispense with any future inquiries of the same nature. There is a sameness in crumpled, musty beds and sweating bodies that repels further investigation on the scale of Mr. Lowry's "The Wolf That Fed Us."

Fiction Notes

BONANZA QUEEN, by Zola Ross. Bobbs-Merrill. \$3. It's the year 1869. Almost anything can happen. Opportunity knocks twice, adventurers flourish, manipulators multiply, while fortunes are made by the waxing and waning of the moon. Virginia City is

the garden spot for this gigantic speculation and the Comstock Lode proves it.

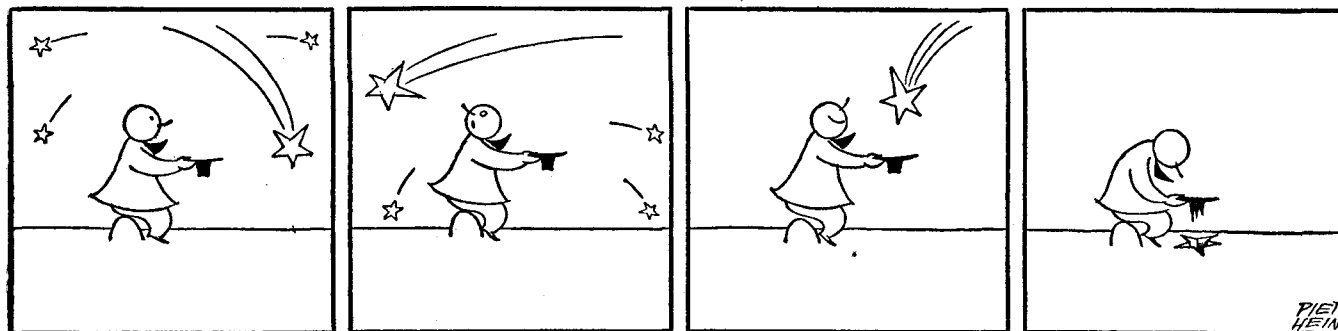
Wildcat, passionate, irresistible Renée Courtelot comes here to stake her claim. After an unfortunate marriage, a misguided love affair, and tempestuous financial vicissitudes, she strikes it rich. And lo! that great brute and bully of a glowering fellow she took for her enemy proves to be her beloved liege lord. Fadeout of passion happily blurred with abundant prosperity. Undeviatingly pedestrian.

O, HUGE ANGEL, by Howard Baer. Roy. \$2.50. Mr. Baer has fashioned a great, granite mass of a man to symbolize false fright. A Negro known as "Mark," ignorant seaman, fierce, brutish, totally inarticulate, and abysmally lonely, comes one night upon the body of a murdered boy in the cavernous streets of San Francisco. In pity he pauses. Oncoming police discover him, instantaneously accuse him, and force him to flee with the heavy cloak of guilt on his huge shoulders. The ship that shelters him also shelters the actual psychopathic, homosexual killer. The driven innocent faces spiritual torture, immense despair, an inevitable need to kill, and one soothing interlude of physical passion before he is cornered and unjustly slaughtered.

The shadow of fear, the tang of escape, and a compassion for all floundering souls offset the somewhat conscious repetition of phrase, and a contrived reshuffling of words. Blow after bloody blow creates remembered emptiness. Terror triumphs.

A CAT AND A KING, by Diana Forbes-Robertson. Random House. \$2.75. One more slap at the aging matinee idol. Egotistical as usual, reeking with rehearsed charm, ready with the word to ensnare or to discard as the mood pleases, this particular beautiful creature breaks hearts as readily as box-office records. This time he drives his alcoholic son to suicide, relegates his wife to an almost zombie-like passivity, and

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"Waiting for a Shooting Star."

U. S. A. Each of the five books we review here deals with a distinct social problem, and each of these problems is one that seriously affects the daily life of every American. In "The Negro in the United States," E. Franklin Frazier supplements rather than duplicates Gunnar Myrdal's now classic "An American Dilemma." In "Elmtown's Youth," August B. Hollingshead explores a basic question: the effect of social classes upon the life and psychology of young people in an average small town. In "Strategy for Liberals," Irwin Ross proffers an alluring compromise between a capitalist economy and a Socialist economy. In "Mink and Red Herring," A. J. Liebling investigates the foibles and failures of the metropolitan newspaper press. In "They Also Believe," Charles S. Braden throws light on this country's numerous small religious sects.

From Slavery to Slums

THE NEGRO IN THE UNITED STATES. By E. Franklin Frazier. New York: The Macmillan Co. 767 pp. \$8.

By ARNOLD M. ROSE

THE increasing literature on minority groups and intergroup relations can be divided into two categories: that written by authors who have intimate acquaintance with the problems involved and that written by authors who approach the problems as outsiders. The new book by Professor E. Franklin Frazier clearly belongs to the former category; because he knew what was significant before he began his task, he has written a significant report on the internal history and present conditions of the Negro in the United States. The study is thorough, well documented, and accurate. It is highly factual, and is not bound together by any theoretical framework or point of view. The book is not written for the general reader, but rather for the student. It is also a splendid reference work.

Practically all the material has been published previously. In describing the present condition of the Negro, the author has tried to use the most recent sources. However, because of the lack of recent monographs in certain of the areas covered by him (notably in health and population), some of the facts and discussions are dated. The reader will be able to detect the areas in which there is need for new monographic studies by looking at the dates in the footnote references. Another source of selection in the book arises from the fact that Dr. Frazier is the outstanding authority on the Negro family, and the sections on the family are more complete and more analytic than are other sections.

Frazier is head of the Department of Sociology at Howard University, the outstanding institution for the higher education of Negroes. He holds his doctorate in sociology from the University of Chicago, and has conducted studies in Europe and Latin America as well as in the United States. Because of his eminence as a sociologist, he was elected to the position of president of the American Sociological Society for the year 1948.

This is not a book on race relations. Frazier demarcates his book from Myrdal's "An American Dilemma" on that basis. Although there is considerable overlap between the two books, the primary focus of the Myrdal volume is on the relations between Negroes and whites, whereas the major focus of the Frazier volume is on the internal conditions and structure of the American Negro group. While this seems to be a useful division of labor, it tends to preclude from Frazier's discussion in some places a thorough discussion of the consequences of what is for Negroes the most impor-

tant factor in their community life—the subordinated role into which they are forced by whites.

Frazier first considers the Negro under the slave regime—both the slave and the free Negro—giving special attention to the plantation as an institution and to slave revolts. He then goes on to the conflict engendered by the Civil War and the Reconstruction period, and the ensuing accommodations. The Negro community is analyzed in terms of population, rural-urban differences, class stratification, the family, the church, fraternal organizations, and business enterprise. Intellectual life is taken up under the headings of the school, the newspaper, and other literature, social movements, race consciousness, and leadership. The problems of health, poverty, unemployment, family disorganizations, crime and delinquency, mental deficiency, insanity, and race prejudice are considered. The book closes with a brief essay on "Prospects for Integration of the Negro Into American Society."

With his penchant for thorough documentation and his emphasis on facts, Frazier tries to avoid taking a stand on controversial issues. Yet he is so completely honest that he cannot avoid the controversies. His critique of the explanation of Negro institutions in terms of the mental and moral inferiority of the Negro is as solid and convincing as it could be. He also carries on his long feud with those who look for African origins for American Negro institutions and behavior patterns. He takes only a passing crack at those who analyze the role of the Negro in America in terms of the concept of caste, contributing the important observation that the social rules subordinating the Negro are not uniform even within the South, much less between South and North. In so doing, however, he neglects the basic sociological fact that no sociological concept has completely uniform application; caste was never exactly the same thing in all parts of India, and it has changed with time. It is quite true, however, that race relations are so different in the North and in the South that if the term is applied to the South it should not also be applied to the North.

The sound scholarship of this book will contribute to the continued sober analysis of the position of minority groups in the United States. The increasing interest in the subject matter in turn stimulates the sort of literature which illuminates the problem.

Arnold M. Rose is associate professor of sociology at Washington University, St. Louis.



—Blackstone Studios, Inc.
"E. Franklin Frazier knew what was significant."